



CALIFORNIA GARDEN

IN THIS NUMBER

SOUTH AFRICAN BULBS

By K. C. Stanford

SEEDING WATER LILIES

By Mrs. W. S. Thomas

A GREATER SAN DIEGO

By Geo. B. Bowers

SEPTEMBER, 1930

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No. 3

SOUTH AFRICAN BLUB

By K. C. Stanford

Bloom Erf, Stellenbosch, South Africa

There is a prevalent idea that South African plants are hard to grow and require almost tropical conditions. This is, of course, quite erroneous. Plants from the Cape are used to a mild but very wet winter while those from "up country" i.e. the Transvaal and Natal are mostly used to frost and dry cold in the winter with rain in the summer when seasons are kind. Reports come in of Cape bulbs standing really cold winters in England and France but it is the European summers that they find trying for they must have plenty of sunshine both for flowering and to ripen the bulb afterwards, therefore California gardens should show them at their best.

The Editor writes of *Ornithogalum thyrsoides* being grown in quantity in southern California. These, while good for packing and travelling long distances, are not very showy for the garden. There is a double-flowered form of *O. thyrsoides* which is a great improvement. *Abyssinicum* is far more handsome, while *O. speciosum* is a beautiful deep orange with a black spot on each petal. Lately I have come into possession of bulbs of an *Ornithogalum* reputed to be scarlet, the color of *Gerbera Jamesonii*, but we do not believe all we are told by those who collect rare plants on the mountains and time will tell; their gray-green foliage is at any rate unusual, and if the flowers are really scarlet and at least a foot high, the species will be a treasure indeed.

But for color in the garden, intense blazing colors, give me *Sparaxis* and *Streptanthera*. It is so easy to get these in quantity. Here at the Cape we sow the seed in shaded beds in March and they bloom in the spring (September) and before the bulbs are taken up in March again each has probably increased by one at least. The predominating color in *Sparaxis* is deep orange with brown centers but there are deep velvety brown ones and rich purple and the tall *Sparaxis Pillansii* in old rose is very distinctive.

As to *Streptanthera*, one has only to see it instantly to fall a victim to its charms. It resembles a *sparaxis* but the flower is rounder and deep orange with a petunia colored center

separated from the orange by a band of black inside which are a diversity of indescribable patterns in which nearly every flower is different. No wonder *Streptanthera cuprea* took an award of merit at a R. H. S. Show in London. These bulbs are good for growing in fibre in bowls for house decoration and quite a novelty.

Then there are the blue flowers. No garden has enough blue and collectors from all over the world are searching for them. First to flower in the very early spring is the grey-blue dainty little *Gladiolus gracilis*, its miniature *gladiolus* blossoms swinging on the wire fine stem in the rough winds and heavy rains, a dainty treasure for a pocket in the rock garden. Later, with the real spring days the *Babianas* open, not unlike deep blue crocuses with pleated leaves; these make a charming edging to a warm border and for sheer intense color there is nothing to beat *Babiana stricta rubro-cyanea* which has a brilliant glowing crimson center to the gentian-blue cup. There are pale blue *Babianas* too and little scented ones and *B. villosa* in every shade of glowing red. For tall blue flowers *Scilla Natalense* makes a good show. The spikes are about 2 feet high with a pyramid of pale blue flowers. The ordinary *Agapanthus* is known to all; it is generally seen in tubs or vases adorning the corners of a lawn or terrace, but there is a much smaller form found in the mountains *A. umbellatus* of a much deeper blue. This is happy in a damp spot and does not dislike some shade. The *Aristeas* are a wonderful blue, a group of the tall species growing on a hillside might easily be mistaken for very fine *Delphiniums* and the tiny ones flowering on the sandy flats in the spring make brilliant patches of blue among sparse grasses and reeds.

The *Geissorhizas*, too, in spite of their awkward name are charming little flowers. There is one a deep blue, another blood red and the more common *Geissorhiza hirta* in two shades of old rose.

There are blue *Lachenalias* too and this seems to surprise many people. *L. unifolia* is very attractive with its steel blue flowers

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sometimes shading to opal, and *L. glauca* is large and has blue grey leaves which blend charmingly with its metallic blue flowers, but best of all is *L. Roodise* with very big spikes of deep blue flowers but this is a newly discovered species and at present scarce.

There are many, many more. I have not mentioned the *Gladioli* or *watsonias* of which new species turn up every year. Perhaps the Editor will allow me space later for these. Anyone who tires the experiment of growing something new from South Africa will be well rewarded.

POISON PLANTS ON THE PACIFIC COAST

Most of us are familiar with the effect of rhus poisoning, east or west. The problem of extermination is the same with us as it was in the case of the writer whose trousers were worn at different times, and each time the symptoms returned but it was a long time before the cause was located. We find that the simplest means of destroying the roots is to employ crank-case oil at the roots. This oil, when it is discarded at garages, is available at no cost. When we pour a quantity of it around the roots, according to the size of the plant, the root dies in a very short time. In both private grounds and public parks we have found this means much more effective than any other. More shoots may sprout when the plant is a vine of trailing habit, but this only means a second application. Our "poison oak" of the Pacific coast, *Rhus diversifolia*, is quite as virulent as *Rhus toxicodendron* of the eastern and middle-western states.

—E. O. ORPET.

Santa Barbara, Calif.

(Massachusetts Horticulture)

NEW MEMBERS AND SUBSCRIBERS FOR SEPTEMBER

Mrs. A Laret, San Diego.

Butler's Feed Mills, San Diego

Mrs. Eloise Roorbach, San Diego

P. J Shaw, New Jersey.

Mrs James Donald, Garden City, Long Island.

Gladys Patric Shahovitch, M. D., Los Angeles.

Barbara C. Aplin, Ventura.

Mrs. L W. Carr, Lemon Grove.

George Heinmiller, Costa Mesa.

Mrs. C. W. Cannon, Honolulu, T. H.

NOTICE OF SEPTEMBER MEETING

The regular meeting of the San Diego Floral Association will be held in the Floral Building in Balboa Park on Thursday evening, September 18th. Mr. A. D. Robinson of Rosecroft Begonia Gardens, Point Loma, internationally known for his Begonia culture, will be the speaker of the evening and will talk on his favorite subject—"Begonias."

THE MYRTLE FAMILY

By Fidella G. Woodcock

Interest in the world's people of different countries is oftentimes expressed in the little gardens that are a bond of fellowship between the races as they migrate over the earth seeking to find the many resources for a community center, the beginnings of social life. The Spanish in exploring the shores of Alta California brought seeds always from the southern lands to plant in their new homes. Sentiment or attachment to beautiful surroundings where the plants were growing induced them to repeat the names of places and their corresponding flora, perhaps for experiment but more likely because the people were familiar with the habits of them and loved their contacts.

The most widely known flower of the European countries and the emblem to which has been attached the greatest prestige is the classic Myrtle sometimes called English Myrtle of the southern countries of Europe near the Mediterranean Sea. It is an evergreen that from the neatness of its foliage, the fineness of the flowers along the stem, rosy or white, with many stamens, and the lusciousness of its berries was suited to adorn the persons of conquerors and magistrates when appearing in the public eye. The flower of festivity became the type of a large order of economic plants and ornamentals, the Myrtales, the strongest characters of which in all plant culture are those of *Myrtus communis*, the type as described. With its many seeded fruits like those of guava, eucalyptus, and eugenia, the delicate condiments, and essential oils, the spices, and the firm, fine woods, to say nothing of the rich perfume of some of the species found in wood, bark and foliage, the myrtle order of plants is most desirable in home grounds and parking as well as in public parks. For cleanliness it ranks first of plantings. Recognized by thick, glossy leaves of leather-like texture, the leaves are almost without exception, in pairs, and sometimes dincorpic, both opposite and alternate, and even connote forms (growing together around the stem). The trusses of feathery flowers below the brilliant young tips of foliage of the eucalyptus tree by its essential oils immune from disease, is generally found to be a health giving tree cleansing the soil and atmosphere from stagnant conditions.

In speaking of myrtles our thoughts usually refer to those types with firm leaves, feathery flowers, and (1) woody capsules; (2) large, or small refreshing fruits; (3) double-faced (sometimes single-faced) oil bearing leaves that produce medicines of various sorts, the common cure for colds and malaria now in sections once filled with miasma.

Masses of these heavily laden branches of staminate flowers continually sweep the air freeing it from dust and germs; the wholesomeness of Balboa Park is due to the large gum plantations of several thousand of the oily eucalypts. The pretty part of the flower is its stamens and not its petals as with most seed producing species.

The bottle-brushes, melaleuca and callistemon cultivated, but cut to the ground each year, tall shrubs that would in time become trees into which has induced the spreading habit to which we owe so much brilliant coloring along Cabrillo Bridge and the glorious *Callistemon rigidum* of the borders of the walks.

Eucalypti, melaleucas, and leptospermums, are mostly brought from Australia and the South Sea Islands, filling an important place in their service to horticulture. But the eugenia is found in nearly all the sub-tropical countries, in the Orient where it yields the clove, the pimiento and the all-spice, and in South America and Mexico where the fruiting forms yield refreshing jams and jellies for tropical consumption. The leptospermum, Australian tea-tree, is a charming introduction, the pure white flowers light up the dry elevations where other flowers are shady. With us it is seldom more than a tall shrub, but it is wonderful in mass decoration being ample and does not produce a crowded effect.

All of the myrtles deserve chapters by themselves but a list of our most thrifty ones will attract us to trim evergreen foliage of formal gardens, of festive wreaths of the victor for all time ancient and modern, for funeral occasions and landscape forms. Mostly seen at the present day in hedges, the borders of our landscape grounds often send out a surprise that ends in a thrill for the crimson eucalypti, the red bottle brush and the tristantias that light up the never-ending green settings where they light the shadowy paths.

In the walks and talks the most suitable discussed for our climate are the following twelve genera:

Myrtle communis.
Eucalyptus.
Leptospermum.
Eugenia.
Melaleuca.
Callistemon.
Guava (*Fragaria selloniana*) Pineapple.
Guava (*Psidium lucidum*) Lemon.
Tristania conferta.
Calothem.
Syncarpia (Rare).
Agonis.
Metrosideros.
Guava, Hawaiian Pear, a wild guava.

SEEDING WATER LILIES

By Mrs. W. S. Thomas

A real plant lover has much of the mother spirit; i.e. she loves the child she has raised from infancy, and raising lilies from seed is a little like a baby—you must have the love and patience.

Perhaps you have looked at your pool some morning and found a mass of little feathery-looking particles covering the water, and you have not known the lily had a seed pod since it was under water. But it has now burst and broadcast the seed which float for a few hours then sink, unless one retrieves them.

Make a solid bed of good soil, press the seed firmly on this and cover very lightly with sand. Sink the dish under about one inch of water and in 21 days you will see a tiny green sprout, that is, of course, if your seed was good and the water fairly warm. When the third leaf appears, transplant carefully to thumb pots. They will bloom the first year if given good care, but of course the plants will be small. You may have plants like the parent or may have a new variety, that is the interesting point, but unless you are an enthusiast, and have plenty of pool room one will save time, money and trouble by buying your lilies. Hardy lilies seldom seed but the Tropicals make up for the stinginess of the former, and are now beginning to ripen their harvest. From now on, the seed pods will be many and it is fascinating to watch the development from the bloom to the bursting pod. The leaf-bearing Tropicals are also now forming new plants as a warning to us that they are making first preparations to close shop for the winter rest. But give all your lilies a fresh dose of Blood and Bone now as a top dressing and you will have blooms for two months yet. In fact, the night bloomers are just getting into full harness, and they are greedy feeders.

If you try the seedlings, you will find they love the muck from the bottom of the pool as a potting soil. It is so soft and just the proper richness and with a top dressing of light sand after planting they grow rapidly, but they prefer to be submerged only a few inches until of a fair size.

MRS. W. S. THOMAS.

PLANTS THAT "FIGHT"

As it is with humans, so it is in plant life—the weaker look to the strong for protection. Many delicate or weak plants skip to safety under thorny branches of cacti or other protection. In Mexico and Texas is a grass particularly desired by cattle and sheep. It grows in almost desert soil, but peeps temptingly from amidst its thorny barrier. Even young animals have learned to appreciate this characteristic.—C. D. B.

A GREATER SAN DIEGO

By George B. Bowers

San Diego desires a greater population and a greater prosperity, two things for which every live citizen strives. To bring numbers, attractions are necessary; two great ones exist, recreation and industry, even though only partially developed or potential.

San Diego might easily become a national playground, even a recreational center of world fame. This has already been envisioned by a few, but the public has been slow to accept any plan because of its cost and lack of vision. A finished Balboa Park would quickly repay the necessary outlay. World-travellers see this value, but such are too few to change public opinion.

Mission Bay, with deep water, by dredging, or a dam, with palm and fern-covered islands, with pools of white and scarlet Egyptian lotus, with canals floating Italian gondolas and wide stretches of water whereon yachts might spread white sails and motors race at Christmas-time, would bring to San Diego fame, visitors and millions. But Mission Bay is but one potential asset; many more exist.

Our city need not be built on recreation alone. It is within a county with recreation assets, a county of palms and pine, summery coasts in winter, wintery mountains in summer at the edge of a virgin desert, covered with mesquite, cacti and moving sandhills, only three hours from the coast.

San Diego, city and county, needs industries; they need not be brought from afar to the detriment of a neighbor state, industries in abundance suited to this locality, and already proven profitable for which markets exist, should be expanded. Many such, although in their infancy or potentially possible, are without competition anywhere in the U. S.

Next to recreation, agriculture is our greatest potential asset. What agricultural industries might San Diego county encourage without encroaching upon those of her neighbor states?

The floral and nursery industries have a future here that few have yet envisioned. Do you know that a few flower-growers of San Diego shipped cut flowers, dry-packed, to Chicago, Detroit, and New York last winter? They enjoyed big profits, for no other state put gladioli, narcissi and daffodils of such fine quality and beauty in those cities in winter-time. Florida fails because of its natural irrigation, while California succeeds because of its slight winter rains, supplemented by artificial irrigation. The cut-flower industry is a potential industry offering labor for many thousands we would invite to make homes here. It is an industry that might be developed without injury to another state, for

markets exist already for all that might be produced.

There is another phase of the floral industry yet in its infancy, that of the flowering-bulb: gladioli, daffodils, and others. Already 500 acres are growing in this country. No one would hazard a guess of its possibilities or how many workers it might employ here. There is a market for bulbs awaiting because the European and Asiatic supplies have been shut out by plant quarantines.

Greenhouse-owners of our Mississippi Valley and Atlantic Coast states would gladly send here their millions for palms grown in lath houses here, for geraniums rooted here, for poinsettias, hibisci and others grown out-of-doors in winter in Southern California. This branch of the nursery trade has been pioneered, it is ready for 10,000 additional workers on acre-home in San Diego county.

Green houses of the United States, devoted to Kentia palms represent an investment of \$300,000,000. Only two regions of the world can produce seed for this great industry: Lord Howe Island, south of Australia, and Southern California, particularly San Diego, where many are now in fruit. Suppose some person of vision had planted a 5 acre lot of Kentias 20 years ago, that one would now have an income equal to that of an oil king. Perhaps the opportunity still exists.

A few nurserymen are now shipping carloads of Kentias grown from San Diego and Coronado seed.

San Diego county has the biggest poinsettia farm in the world at Encinitas. Annually it furnishes many carloads for florists of the Middle West. At Oceanside is the biggest flowering-geranium nursery of the world.

Some years ago Valley Center had the only soapberry grove in the United States: it was in a flourishing condition. It excited no public interest. A new owner cut down the trees that would have netted fortunes if exploited. An opportunity was overlooked. Millions are sent abroad annually for vegetable soap, a product used at every soda fountain in our land.

Guayule, a native rubber plant, was bred to success in obscurity on a ranch in San Diego county, but lost to Salinas and other communities where millions have since been invested. The success of the local experiments has solved one of our important problems of national defense; without rubber no war may be won. With great areas in Guayule, we are assured of a supply of rubber should our foreign sources be cut off.

San Diego county has many thousands of acres now waste or pastures that might be growing Guayule as a part of our program of our national defense. Sometime we may act, but why not now?

San Diego abounds in opportunities; we need not seek elsewhere.

GARDENS VISITED BY FLORAL ASSOCIATION ON AUGUST 10th.

The garden of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Scripps at the very S. W. corner of Pacific Beach has a very unique situation and proves a great deal for garden development near the coast. Its proximity to the ocean and sand dunes necessitated a dense planting at the west—so the garden is today entirely sheltered by suitable plants, well established. Its situation on the shore of Mission Bay is charming and the growth of trees of many sorts are a great surprise and give wonderful shade and shelter for the choicest of flowering plants.

The space directly in front of the house is open for an unobstructed marine and mountain view. The garden walk by the bay shore overlooks a charming growth in the very sands of the sea, one of the playgrounds for the several grand children.

This large garden was first planted to a generous and general assortment of trees some 25 years ago and gradually pergolas, vine arbors, hedges, play houses and cottages were built about. So today this fine garden beneath shade trees and among covered arbors and high hedges is as in no other garden in San Diego.

The big lath house is a charming, tropical den of beauty and shade—not an inch of bare ground is in sight except the paths. Tuberous Begonias in a bed of Maidenhair fern. A Tree fern to the roof top, very large begonias against the walls and along the paths. Various hanging baskets and wall pockets overflowing with beauty—for Mrs. Scripps is a very inventive gardener.

The pink pendulous roots from that intensive Evergreen grape drapes the passage way to the north section. Here is a fern bordered pool with porcelain geese for caretakers, beneath a Kentia Belmoreana palm. The sides of the room of rustic wood hung with stag horn ferns and clinging vines. Old logs and tree stumps make artistic supports for foliage plants and a huge Alocasia, with leaves three feet wide on six foot stems, a real touch of the tropics.

One of the recently planted sections beneath shade contains hanging, rustic and artistic old logs full of growing ferns, trailing vines and foliage plants. Also a miniature Japanese garden. The hills and hollows about are green with Helxine moss and colorful pots and foliage plants and big tuberous begonias for more color.

The Ann Hathaway Cottage with its dear little front garden, the size of a small table cloth, is a real gem and the pathway leads on to the small formal rock walled English garden, which has grown so wild in this climate that it doesn't resemble the tidy English

gardens with their small growth of many and various types of plants.

The beds of cutting flowers are well bordered with sweet alyssum, ageratum, and lavender lantanas. There is a large planting in the back grounds of Goldenrod that promises much fall beauty.

There are Rose beds and Rose covered pergolas. There are generous dahlia, glad, aster, marigold, lily and chrysanthemum sections—also phlox drummondii, maidenhair fern, and violet beds all for cutting and a row of moss roses that long for a call from their old "pal" Jack Frost.

A very charming feature in the west open and formal section of the garden is a large circular and shallow pool with a central white marble fountain and bird bath. The surface of the pool is filled, but not crowded, with the ever-green, pretty, lavender flowered water hyacinth in full bloom. The whole is worth a half hour's enjoyment from a nearby Italian seat.

The latest addition to these interesting grounds has been a rock and shallow water garden beneath a group of old and very tall trees, close to the S. W. side of the house. This development is worthy of serious observation now and again a year hence. Big old logs and tree stumps were left in place in this old forest corner. A few woody vines, ferns, creeping Junipers, violets and "Johnny Jump Ups" have started growth in the leafy floor covering. The old outcropping rocky ledge, apparently there for a century, is moss covered and weathered. The shallow pool and its outlet stream sinks beneath old logs and water loving plants. That little forest section is a real gem.

This individual garden suggests a generous planting of shade trees on some portion of every home lot and the larger the lot the better. Then in a few years you can make a charming garden in your own corner forest.

K. O. SESSIONS.

MURDEROUS LIANA

This parasite, whose weak stem is unable to support its ponderous head, clings to its neighbors. It springs up beside a tree and, as its stem grows, spreads like a soft poultice over the tree-trunk. Then climbing arms wrap themselves around the body of its victim, joining on the other side. Heavier and heavier grows the murderous Liana. Finally, it gains the top of the tree and sunlight, and here it flaps its leaves insolently in its victim's face, the poor tree which is slowly being choked to death. At last the sap in the tree is stopped from flowing and it dies, while Liana waves its leaves exultingly over the dead tree in its murderous grasp.—C. D. B.

The California Garden

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
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EDITORIAL

Articles appearing in this and the last issue in August, point out to the readers the sad neglect of the few beautiful street trees we have in San Diego; also the lack of interest and support of the powers that be, toward any definite program of street tree planting and care.

As this is written, the election returns show the apparent defeat of the "State Park Bonds," by reason of the lack of a two-thirds majority vote. The writer believes that this is largely due to a blind prejudice against any increase in taxes and assessments, rather than to a carefully deliberated decision of the voters. It would seem, therefore, that we who realize the value of civic beauty and conservation of natural beauty, have our task clearly indicated. We must educate the voting public to the value actual and potential of parks, street trees and various other civic programs of this nature. Mile on mile of paved cement highways have been built recently and many of them unwarranted. These have been promoted largely by real estate developers and because of this condition a legitimate construc-

tive project must suffer defeat. That we will all some day realize the mistake of neglecting our street trees is certain. That we will all some day regret losing the State Park sites is probable. Let us commence at once some definite constructive program towards the speedy fulfillment of our destiny as a city of semi-tropical beauty, similar to Honolulu, Rio de Janeiro and others. What finer heritage could we hope to pass on to the coming generation?

FESTIVAL DE LAS FLORES AT LA MESA

La Mesa's third annual flower show and festival was again an outstanding success. Amateur entries more than made up for the absence of several large professional growers who made splendid exhibits the two previous years. The Rockleigh Gardens, of La Mesa, and H. D. Fish of Chula Vista were the largest competitors in the professional dahlia classes. Both had very creditable exhibits. Rockleigh Gardens making the largest and most elaborate display won the cups for general display and sweetstakes. Amateur dahlia growers were well represented, L. G. Randall winning the cup for the best collection and display, and L. H. Baldwin winning the sweepstakes trophy.

Zinnias shown were the finest the writer has ever seen on exhibition and all types were well represented. Large, medium, and pom-pom types as well as novelties and species. The best collection was shown by Mrs. Harrison Albright of Spring Valley, the best display by Mrs. R. L. Prather of La Mesa Highlands and the sweepstakes cup went to Mr. Geo. Holmes of La Mesa.

One of the features of the show was the keen competition in the private garden and Women's Club contests, eight large individual displays being entered. Artistic arrangements and displays of tropical and rare fruits were better than they have been in the past.

A very fine display of cactus and succulents was made by McCabe Cactus Gardens of Encanto, which won a silver cup. A rock garden refreshing in its simplicity was built and displayed by Avery Bros. of Grossmont. It was awarded a special prize by the judges.

The first night of the show, nine blooms were open on a plant of night blooming cereus, while on two others were three and two, respectively. About four blooms were open the second night.

The Johnson Nursery of La Mesa made up a miniature garden complete with bungalow and landscaped it very cleverly. It won a special award as there was no way in which it could be placed in competition. The showing of begonias and ferns was larger and finer.

Some idea of the infinite variety of blooms and plants shown can be comprehended when

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the large number of classes is considered, there being about one hundred and eighty-five classes.

Spanish costumes were much in evidence and the La Mesa Municipal Boys' Band and the La Mesa Boys' Orchestra furnished entertainment afternoons and evenings of both days of the show.

The judges were Walter S. Merrill of Pt. Loma; Peter McKenzie of Coronado and John Marshall of Glen Abbey.

SANSEVERIAS

The name is after Raimond de Sangro, Prince of Sanseveria, who lived in Naples about 1710.

Sanseverias are herbaceous perennials for house, or shady garden, grown for their attractive stiff leaves which are usually variegated. A 1915 Kew Bulletin is said to have described 54 species, but only a few of them are at all common or ever seen in our country.

San. Zeylanica is the one most in evidence and is to be found in homes or conservatories of the wealthy, and again in most unexpected spots in humble homes and gardens. No corner is too dark or poorly ventilated to materially hinder their growth, but—and this is important for their success—water must be given sparingly. "Kept on the dry side" describes their preference, and they appreciate a fairly heavy soil. Zeylanica's leaves form, 8-15 in a cluster, one to three feet long, sword shaped, dark green, marked with grayish white.

Next in popularity, but rare and higher priced, is "Laurentii" which has lovely creamy yellow bands along the leaf margins. This, combined with the regular variegations, is most attractive.

Propagation is easy from 3 to 4 in. long leaf cuttings, but natural divisions produce better shaped and truer plants. Beware cutting up leaves of Laurentii and expecting banded leaves on all the youngsters! Only young shoots forming from the yellow leaf edges come true. The average Laurentii cutting disappointingly reverts to the common Zeylanica.

San. Cylindrica is queer in its looks with its 3 to 4 ft. long, solid, round spikes or leaves, dark green with paler variegation. Cylindrica is usually found only in private collections of rare plants, or in park conservatories, but sometimes ventures into trade channels, always commanding a good price.

Sanseverias grown by enthusiastic admirers are fine additions to one's plant family, with attention always drawn to them. Unappreciated, they only form dull background. With 54 or more species wandering about, why do we see so few kinds in cultivation? And where may one purchase, say, Miss Sanseveria No. 4 or No. 54?—C. D. B.

REPORT OF AUGUST MEETING

By Mrs. W. S. Thomas

Our speaker at the regular meeting this month was Mr. W. K. Morrison of Chula Vista, who for twelve years was employed by the Imperial Department of Agriculture of the British Government in West Indies, Canary and Cape Verde Islands, Central America and Mediterranean countries.

In part he told us there was more investigation in Central American countries many years ago than at present. In the latter part of the nineteenth century there were numbers of Orchid hunters in this section, while now these beauties are hybridized in our own country, along with other plants. A natural lath house system of agriculture is practised there, the immense leguminous trees forming the roof. These are planted and allowed to gain some height before the other planting. Here papayas grow more successfully than elsewhere and cherimoya as large as a man's head after weighing 10 pounds. Brazilian nut trees live 2 to 300 years and bear constantly. He thinks we could grow the bulbous Orchids of these countries in the same houses with our Begonias. (Perhaps we may not need houses for them, since I saw them growing luxuriantly in the open at Santa Monica in Hugh Evans garden.) The bananas shipped to us he says are far from the best grown and are never eaten there but are fed to stock. An African variety is the finest looking and has a black stem. He thinks we should grow more bananas and bamboo here to beautify our city.

In the West Indies they have a Sapadillo or Persimmon more like a peach which he believes could be crossed with the Japanese variety and grown here profitably. They make a wonderful drink from the cassia and the juice of the green coconut beats our soda water, but the milk in the nut as we get it is really soured and not fit to drink. Mangoes in the tropics are like apples to Americans.

The criticism commonly heard after his talk was that having such a world of knowledge he needed more time in which to tell us. He named many fruits of the tropics which San Diego could grow and now unknown here. One noticeable statement was that there are many animals and birds which we could successfully import here and make useful.

Since the night of the meeting the writer has learned that Mr. Morrison once imported several colonies of stingless bees from Orinoco to New York, which were distributed in America but not understanding their native conditions the keepers failed to make them live. He has also edited many Bee Journals, some of which were translated into nearly every language. In such an ideal bee country as southern California why cannot we import stingless bees and become still more famous?

PITTOSPORUMS OF BALBOA PARK

By C. I. Jerabek

Pittosporums are shrubs noted for their quick growth and beautiful foliage. There is hardly a garden of any size that does not have at least one variety.

P. undulatum (Victorian Box) is the commonest of the pittosporums. It is of very rapid growth and much prized for grouping purposes, with large, lanceolate, wavy leaves, deep green and glossy; yellowish-white, fragrant flowers followed by orange-colored berries. This shrub also makes a wonderful specimen for a large lawn or can be trimmed as a formal hedge. There are two fine hedges of this variety in the Park Stadium and some excellent shrubs north and east of the American Legion Building.

P. tobira (Japanese Pittosporum) has very fragrant flowers. It is generally grown as a low shrub and can be shaped easily by the use of shears, making it a splendid shrub for formal use. This variety has dull green obovate very obtuse leaves and white flowers. There are plantings of these shrubs surrounding the Sun Dial in the southwest corner of the park, also along Quince Street near Sixth.

P. tobira variegata, with white and green leaves, is somewhat slower in growth than the other varieties, but is one of the handsomest and most attractive. A beautiful hedge may be seen along the walk north of the Art Gallery.

P. eugenoides (Tarata) is grown as a tree or shrub. It has light or yellowish-green crinkly leaves and yellow flowers; the bark of the heavy branches is white, but the twigs are brown. It makes a very showy tree or shrub. Several large trees are growing naturally west of the Natural History Museum and some north of the Botanical Building, and a very good formal planting of them is in front of the Stadium and along walks leading to the Organ plaza.

P. viridiflorum (Cape Pittosporum) is especially valuable in large lawns or borders, as it grows to an immense size. It has large, glossy-green, spatulate leaves and bunches of greenish flowers, followed by very small yellow berries. A few magnificent specimens are along the south edge of the Formal Garden and in the border around the lawn south of the Horse-shoe Club House.

P. Rhombifolium (Queenland Pittosporum) is a charming tree and suitable for street planting, with its diamond shaped, light green leaves and large corymbs of fragrant, white flowers resembling the eastern snowballs (*Viburnum Opulus* var. *sterile*), and the bloom is followed by the green berries, finally turning to a deep orange. Several trees of this species are located along the wall in the southwest corner of the

Plaza de Panama and beside the walk northwest of the Rose Garden.

P. Crassifolium is invaluable for seacoast planting, as it stands the salt spray well. It has gray-green, leathery leaves, red flowers followed by black berries. The foliage reminds one of the pineapple guava (*Feijoa Sellowiana*). A dozen splendid shrubs are underneath the pergola south of the Montezuma Gardens, and another group growing more naturally south of the Golden Hill aviary.

P. phyllraeoides (Narrow-Leaved Pittosporum) is a willowy, graceful tree of a drooping habit, with small, narrow, bright green leaves and flowers scattered along the branches. It is exceedingly beautiful with the flowers, the green and the orange-colored berries hanging on the pendulous branches all at the same time. This tree is very desirable for dry locations. Between Arizona Street and Pershing Drive is a large planting, and a stray one along the walk east of the California Building.

P. tenuifolium, often called *Nigricans* because it has flowers and branches almost black; the leaves are small and of a light green color. This tree or shrub grows very upright and symmetrical, but of many side branches coming up near the base. There are two attractive ones along the walk below the Lookout at Marston's Point, and several in the planting surrounding the building at the end of West Juniper Street.

P. floribunda is an ungainly tree but useful in group plantings. It has large lanceolate leaves, light green and glossy, flowers in terminal corymbs of a yellowish color. A tree can be found on each side of the entrance to the old Civic Auditorium, and another may be seen beside the walk near the southwest corner of the Botanical Building.

P. heterophyllum is desirable for banks and rockeries, being a half-reclining shrub; the leaves are light green and small; the flowers somewhat scarce. There are several about fifty feet north of the California Building.

CESTRUM

Cestrum, "Night-Blooming Jessamine."

The wildly fragrant one is familiar to most of us. But is the rose or red flowered variety? It forms a bush similar to the yellowish sort, but the night fragrance is delicate and the graceful sprays of blossoms by day are a beautiful sight when really observed. The conspicuous white berries or seeds of the common night-bloomer are lacking in the red sort, but it does produce at this season, scores of smaller sized rosy-red berries.

Space in the garden for this "quiet" member of the *Cestrum* family is a good investment, we aver.—C. D. B.

LATH HOUSE MATTERS

By Alfred D. Robinson

We are still warm, this being the ninth day that has passed the eighty mark and I am becoming nothing but an animated sprinkling can, and not so animated at that. I have quit perspiring and am now frankly sweating. I get no sympathy from my visitors so I judge it is warmer still where they home, and they look "Boloney" when I comment on the unusualness of the weather. If I could find comfort in the greater suffering of others I might turn to the accounts of Europe sweltering under a hot blast from Africa or the report of an Eastern gardener who states that the heat this year had ruined his Tuberous Begonias in spite of their being covered with hay and destroyed his Primulas of many varieties though in full shade. I confess that after writing this I do feel better, knowing my lathhouse is going to bed thoroughly wet down, and I reflect on the statement I read in the daily press that BECAUSE OF THE MILDNESS OF THE SEASON certain flowers would be extra good for the Fall Show.

There is a Nightscented Jasmine blooming in my lathhouse and a visitor noticing it related how she had one which she made do its smelling in the afternoon for her bridge parties by cutting a flowering branch two hours before the time of guests and shutting it in a dark closet and fooling it into the belief that night had fallen. The lady's husband vouched for the story and he was a newspaperman which should be "Nuff said."

I hope no reader got excited through my reference last month to Tibouchina Semidecandra for it turns out to be an old friend Pleroma Splendens that we all know. Years ago I made a color plate of a regular grove of it growing in Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, nevertheless it is a worthwhile subject.

The greatest Rex Begonia addict in the four winds has just paid me a visit. He is ashamed of my Rexes and describes his own with gestures that would aptly illustrate a fish story, they are so amazing in girth. He diagnoses the cause of my shame as water and relates how all the women in Los Angeles go down to his town to wash their hair, the water there being so soft. I cannot reveal, thank the engaged couples for the word, the name

of this blessed place as the long waiting queue of would-be washers already clutters its streets and byways. I gave this dweller in Elysian Fields many many Rex leaves, I was so completely hypnotised by his language, it seemed the best thing to do as I am in no position to move my lathhouse. Persiflage aside, this enthusiast has an advantage over me in that his water is the same the year round while the very superexcellence of that served me the first half of the year makes the Reservoir-River-sand mixture all the worse in comparison. I am trying the alum treatment, half an ounce of supersaturated solution to the gallon of water but it is too early to speak of results though I am getting a satisfactory deposit at the bottom of the tank but what it is I know not. I have seen a reference to the "Morgan" soil test outfit as being one that any fool can use, that was not the language exactly but I am sure of the meaning. The notice said that this was procurable through the LaMotte Chemical Company but did not say where they are but I am on their trail. I am going to know more about this soil and water question. I mean to know whether a soil mixture is good or bad for a certain plant before making the plant make the test.

Perhaps the most remarked plant in the lathhouse at this writing are the Achimenes of which I have six colors. These are trailing plants of the Gesneria family admirable for rock work and baskets. Bailey tells me that they are natives of Central and South America and they like a strong light, not much sun, plenty of water and warmth. The curious rhizomes like little fir cones multiply rapidly and they are undoubtedly a great acquisition to our lathhouse basket plants. It might be unfortunate to expect them to do as well an ordinary season as in this extra warm one, and it is well to store in the mind the fact that the name Achimenes is derived from an even more unpronounceable Greek word meaning to suffer from cold, I got this out of Bailey. Achimenes are to be grown from seed by a patient person but just where to get the seed I don't know though I am wanting to quit writing this to try and find out. You will know the blooms of Achimenes from their appearance of having been sat on but remained undismayed.

I have never before realized how indispensable to bloom is sunshine and I am beginning to feel real annoyance when the lathhouse is spoken of as a Shade house. Again and again failure to bloom on the part of Begonias reported to me has been traced to shade instead of the filtered sunlight which should be the condition in lathhouses. In the propagating department I have three six-foot strips of cloth over the lath and this does not allow enough sunshine and another year I shall alternate cloth and no cloth as is done with the lath. In beds of seedling tuberous there is a well defined line where the shade becomes too heavy, and blooms stop. The cutting beds have had no cloth and yet in this season of maximum sunshine, all varieties have struck almost a hundred per cent and very rapidly, of course, they have never been allowed to dry.

I feel I should warn against trying to make the tuberous Begonias put in too long a working season, they began very early and before long some will begin to show signs of weariness, the bottom leaves will begin to yellow, the flowers to get small and in some cases the making of buds stop altogether. Let the faithful things have a rest, water just enough to keep from wilting, to withhold water entirely is fatal till the top comes off, and give them quite a bit of sun. Our wonderful climate allows us to grow splendid tuberous Begonia plants but its very excellence is a handicap in growing the tuber. Take last year when summer extended into the next January making the worst season ever for the tuber which should have stopped growth in October but kept on making little spurts for months completely exhausting the tuber. I do not believe tuberous Begonias can be grown commercially for the tuber except where a definite weather check comes in October. I am told that in Belgium where there are fields of these plants that the tops are cut down in a night in October by frost, and Belgium raises wonderful tubers. A Belgian is raising tuberous Begonias in large quantities in Santa Cruz county and he tells me the blessed frost arrives on time in October there and I have had his tubers and they are good. The good book says there is a time for everything and it is certain there is a time for Tuberous Begonias to quit growing, not only that they want to be checked definitely while the tuber is full of energy. All this is to get you to assist your plants to quit instead of urging them to keep on doing it some more.

I have Primula, Pansy and Viola and Cineraria seed coming along, in fact several flats of plants. What are you preparing for the winter show?

A GARDEN VISIT

By C. I. Jerabek

On August 10th, members of the San Diego Floral Association were given the opportunity of visiting one of the most interesting gardens in this city, at the home of Miss K. O. Sessions, Soledad Terrace.

As we came around the house, we could get a perspective of the garden, planted evidently after much time and thought. After standing here a while discussing the plan, we wandered along under the pergola and noticed that there was a different kind of vine on each pillar, here a beautiful Polygonum Auberti (Silver Lace Vine) a mass of delicate white flowers; and on the other side an evergreen ivy (Ampelopsis Arborea) with its small, dark green, cut leaves and black berries; then farther along a splendid Passiflora Caerulea covered with purplish blossoms.

At the right was the door of a small glasshouse. I entered, and at the first glance it looked like a hodgepodge mess, but on further examination it revealed pots and pans of seedlings and cuttings of cacti and other plants of many varieties, which were very interesting in their various stages of growth. I would have liked to tarry longer here, but as there were so many things to see I had to hurry along.

As I stepped out into the lathhouse my attention was called to a row of those delicate Scottish bluebells (*Campanula rotundifolia*) and some *Ophiopogon japonicus* var. *variegatus* (Snake's Beard) bearing short stalks of white flowers, followed by such attractive purple berries. An elegant *Fuchsia triphylla*; this species was lost to cultivation for a hundred and fifty years. It is one of the varieties that will grow so readily from seed.

While stopping to take note of some plant, I heard exclamations like these: "Lovely!" "Magnificent!" "How beautiful!" "Isn't it grand!" I hastened my steps to see the cause of this and as I rounded a corner a most gorgeous sight met my eyes—*Passiflora racemosa* (horticulturally called *Princeps*) with its graceful branchlets hanging with deep red flowers. To the rear of us I could see an immense vase holding a large bunch of *Bamboo Falconeri*.

From here we could see out through an opening onto a small water garden surrounded by that lovely shrub, *Tibouchina elegans*, with its rich purple flowers and soft velvety foliage; *Coprosma Baueri* variegata, having a green center and white edges; *Beloperone*, whose blossoms resemble *Bougainvillea lateritia*; *Bauhinia tomentosa*, with its small leaves and yellow flowers; *Plumeria acutifolia* with those exquisite flowers; and *Euphorbia heterophylla*, the annual poinsettia.

Someone said, "What is that beautiful vine

with yellow and cream-colored flowers?" Miss Sessions answered, "*Pithecoctenium muricatum*." Nearby was a stately *Araucaria excelsa* (Norfolk Island Pine) about fifteen feet high, and we were informed that the seed came from a tree in the Coronado Hotel grounds.

Sauntering down through the garden, we came to a clump of rare acacias; *A. obliqua*; *A. prominens*; *A. linearis*; *A. calamifolia*; *A. leptoclada*, and a couple of *A. pubescens*, the most graceful and beautiful of the acacias. Several years ago Mr. Hertrick bought a small, straggly tree of this variety, for which he paid one hundred fifty dollars. You may see this same tree today in the Huntington Gardens, San Marino, Calif.

Passing many interesting shrubs, we entered the cactus garden by the "Path of Ease." Here and there we noticed some striking plants—*Aloe ferox*; *A. lineata*; *A. cornuta*; *A. macroclado*, and *A. plicatilis*, like some giant's hand; *Kalanchoe tubifolia*, whose leaves resemble spotted worms. On the ends of these leaves little plants form, occasionally falling to the ground and taking root. And could you believe it! Some little stone faces (*Lithops Lesliei*); *Cephalocereus senilis* (Old Man Cactus); a tall *Carnegiea gigantea* (Suarro) and two large clumps of *Fourgueria splendens* (Ocotillo or Candlewood).

Farther up the terraces we could see many kinds of rock plants, but we hurried on, passing groups of *Ilex*, *Pyracanthas* and *Junipers*. At the corner of the house, trailing over a *Eugenia Operculatum*, was a pretty *Antigonon leptopus* (*Rosa de Montana*) with its pendulous racemes of pink flowers.

Across the driveway, such an exquisite planting of *Ericas* (Heaths). And will you look at that beautiful silver tree! (*Leucadendron argenteum*.)

In bloom in front of the porch were two lovely bushes of the white *Gardenia*, and scattered about were asters, violas, purple petunias and verbenas.

I entered the house and went into the sun room, while the others were taking their leave of the hostess and telling her what a delightful time they had spent. As I stood gazing out over the grand old Pacific and then to where the waves were coming in along Mission Beach, and on to Ocean Beach, Loma Portal, the Marine Base; North Island, Coronado, and the skyscrapers of San Diego in the distance, Presidio Hills Park and its Museum, the white tower standing like a sentinel guarding Old Town, then back to Mission Bay, the Causeway and to Pacific Beach nestling at the base of the hill, three thoughts came to my mind—a beautiful garden, a magnificent view, and a remarkable woman, Miss K. O. Sessions.

HIBISCUS FLOWERS

By P. D. Barnhart

When in Honolulu where this shrub grows to a degree of perfection the year round, unknown to California, because of the tropical climate, I learned something about the use of the flowers for decorative purposes. They endure but a day, and to cut a branch of the shrub with a flower on it is to deprive the plant of a flower the following day, and for every day during the season.

Over there, the half open flowers are collected every morning, and for support in a scheme of decoration, the mid rib of Coacoa Nut Palm leaves are used. Since I came home I used light rustless wire for stems, and get the same effect as they do with the midribs.

The half developed flower will open up quite as beautifully off the bush, as it does on the bush. For spectacular effect a bowl of the bloom is without compare. Instead of water for holding the wire stem erect, sand is used, therefore there is no mussing table covers, and that pleases the housekeeper. Let it be known that *Hibiscus* flowers grown in California are quite as brilliant as those grown on the Islands. To be sure they grow varieties which will not endure our climate, mild as it is. One such variety is known as *Hibiscus schibopetalus*. Time was when plant enthusiasts attempted to grow this species in this Southland, and did have a flower or two for exhibition, but the plants were always unhappy. I have not seen one in ten years in any of our gardens, and my advice is don't try. There are plenty other things to fill up our Shrubberies that have proven themselves worthy our time and efforts at beautifying the landscape.

NATURE'S NURSERY

As one writer puts it: "Mother Nature has no sooner hushed one set of children to rest than she begins to attend the needs and to superintend the labors and frolics of many more."

"Night is full of life as beautiful and intense as that of the day, and as unknown to many of us as that of another planet."

In water-plants, the floating foliage has its breathing cells on the upper side, just the reverse of land plants.

Even in the vegetable world, poor folks who have to walk (ants, etc.) are not welcomed like high-toned flying guests.—C. D. B.

Hiding plants are very cunning in escaping detection. Weeds often hide amongst plants similar to themselves. Nightshade sneaks in beside tomato plants. Dandelions make up to turnips and radishes. In this way many a plant that otherwise would be destroyed escapes notice and succeeds in establishing a home and bearing seed.—C. D. B.

THE TRAGEDY OF THE COCOS PLUMOSA PALM

The diseased palm whose top so suddenly fell in the Plaza has demanded everyone's attention to the condition of health of every cocos plumosa palm throughout the city. It is a fact that there are more of these palms in this county than elsewhere in southern California.

Thus far it seems to be the established fact by those competent to know, that the diseased and infected part of the trunk is caused by a fungus growth and not by any insect like ants or microscopic animals such as termites.

It is a well known horticultural fact that sickly plants, those below par in health, are the ones that scale insects and diseases of various sorts attack. The older a tree or palm, the deeper and broader spread is their root system and therefore the artificial watering should be for a longer period and farther from the base or trunk of the tree or palm. In this dry climate do we realize this fact seriously enough?

Trees and palms planted in the narrow parkway space between the curb and sidewalk with a heavy sod lawn over the surface stand a very slim chance of getting much water to the ends of their roots and especially with the street gutters all paved. Also the same plants in a lawn that is frequently sprinkled to keep the grass green may not get a soaking of water to the root tips. The older the plant, the more necessary it is to have a few times, at least in the summer months, a real generous watering of a few hours. I believe that all the cocos palms in the city that show a diseased and broken down and decayed bark in patches are the result of a dried out and starved condition due to lack of water and to some extent, fertilizer. Many plants that I have been observing that I planted in extra well prepared holes and in good soil sections, I have not been able to find with any defective or diseased trunks. The plaza palms were well planted 3 years ago, January 19th, but the lawn watering only may not have been sufficient and there is much pavement thereabouts.

On the west and east side of Sixth street south of Juniper, several of those palms have died out. There is no lawn nor any residence near at hand. On Sixth street, above Juniper, I have not noticed a diseased palm on the west side, but I have not examined every one. The case of every diseased palm in the city should be reported to the Agricultural Office and this trouble seriously studied. If the paved sidewalks are incorporated with the curb and the trees and palms for a street set on the inside and adjoining the garden and lawns they would always have a better chance

for water and care and I believe this plan should be compulsory on all newly improved streets.

K. O. SESSIONS.

TAXODIUM MUCRONATUM MONTEZUMA CYPRESS

This is a tree of so much beauty, that I am led to wonder why it has not come into favor with Landscape Architects of California.

An evergreen tree with fine feathery foliage; symmetrical in growth, graceful in outline, unsurpassed in beauty by any other tree yet introduced into this Southland. It is a native of the highlands of Mexico, where it is said to attain to a height of 140 feet, and an amazing diameter of 20 feet. An avenue of them would be a thing of beauty and a joy for centuries. There are two specimens in San Diego, one in Hollywood, one in Huntington Botanic Garden. There may be others in our midst though unknown to the writer.

The avenue of *Cedrus deodara* in Altadena has made that city famous, so also would an avenue of *Taxodium mucronatum* make San Diego famous.

It must be clearly understood that while its sister, *Taxodium distichum*, the Bald Cypress that grows in the swamps of the Atlantic coast, must have water aplenty, this subject will thrive on a minimum amount of moisture.

With this thought in mind, the writer suggests to the lovers of trees resident of San Diego to plant the bank of San Diego river with this tree. To be sure the little trees would have to be watered until they become established, after which the subsoil would furnish enough moisture for their development.

This adventure in the beautification of San Diego should not be an expensive one, and the ultimate result would give the City one feature of distinctive character. Miss Sessions has the trees and should be paid a fair price for them. They should be set 40 feet apart, the ground cleared of all vegetation for a space of ten feet diameter, and kept clear, and cultivated for five years at least. You men of San Diego, who are endowed with Civic Pride, may say "that's a fine idea, here is five dollars towards carrying it to a successful conclusion."

Gentlemen, that is not enough! Give of yourselves and keep the cash in your pockets. Appoint a day when the work is to begin, then with coats off, and your hands clad in fifteen cent gloves, go to work and learn, if you do not yet know the joy that flows from labor, into which you have put your heart and soul.

The women of the Floral Association will cheer you by their presence, wipe the sweat of toil from your brows if necessary, and feed you well into the bargain.

Furthermore, in digging the ground for the planting of the trees, you will find the jewel known as HAPPINESS.

Happiness in gardening, and tree planting come from doing the work OURSELVES

PETER D. BARNHART

GLEANINGS FROM BAILEY'S

Eucalyptus (Greek, eu, well;—kalypto, to cover as with a lid). Refers to the habit of flowering, the covers or lids which fall off as the flower opens from its well-like calyx.

Geranium (Greek, crane; from the resemblance of the fruit to a crane's bill).

Gypsophila (gypsum-loving; because it likes calcareous soils).

Echeveria (named for Atanasio Echeverria, an excellent Mexican botanical draughtsman). One of our now popular succulent families.

Mesembryanthemum (Greek, midday flower; the flowers usually open in sunshine and close in shadow).

Dracena (female dragon; the dried juice supposed to resemble dragon's blood). Ornamental hothouse or tender plants with variegated leaves.

Cocos, a Palm (Portuguese, monkey, from the nut which suggests a monkey's face). Genus includes the coconut and 50 other palms.

Cobaea (after Father Cobo, Spanish Jesuit of the 17th century, naturalist and resident of America for many years). Attractive climbers.

Adiantum (Maidenhair Fern). Greek, unwetted.

Carnegiea (named for Andrew Carnegie, philanthropist). One of the giant tree cacti of Arizona, California and Mexico. Also called Suwarro.

Camellia (after George Joseph Kamel or Camellus, a Moravian Jesuit, who traveled in Asia in the 17th century).

Bougainvillea (De Bougainville, a French navigator of the 17th century). So. American shrubby climbers.

SEPTEMBER WEATHER IN SAN DIEGO

By Dean Blake

Those who have lived in San Diego for any length of time will unhesitatingly affirm that September is the warmest month of the year. And in a certain way it is. The mean temperature during July and August is higher, but the highest temperatures for the year are more apt to occur in September than any other month. Indeed, of the 74 days with a maximum over 90 degrees, that have been recorded since the establishment of the station in 1872, 30 occurred in this month. However, hot days in September are invariably accompanied by low humidity and winds of moderate velocity, so are not oppressive or unduly enervating.

As a rule the rainfall is light. Occasionally, a storm that has its origin off the Mexican or Lower Californian coast, moves northward and unseasonably heavy rains take place over southern California, but such visitations are unusual.

Light winds, abundant sunshine and many days of clear blue skies may be expected. With the humidity lower than the preceding months, the temperature range increases and the nights become somewhat cooler. On the whole, it is an exceedingly pleasant time of the year.

LAWNS

By F. F. Rockwell

(Th Macmillan Co., 1929; \$1.00)

This impresses us as one of the best and most useful of the Macmillan "Home Garden Handbooks." The value, construction, maintenance, and repair of lawns are concisely elucidated, with special chapters devoted to the standard problems of how to get good seed, how to combat weeds and pests, and what type of lawn to use under various special conditions. The book is well illustrated both by diagrams and photographs.—S. S. B.

INDIAN-PIPE

An interesting robber plant is the corpse plant, or Indian-pipe. It is of the fungus type, its fibrous roots growing in decayed vegetable matter or old roots of trees. The white stems grow in bunches, each one topped with a large white flower shaped like a pipe-bowl. These flowers are odorless and turn black the moment they are plucked. The Indians held these plants in great esteem, regarding each as the symbolic expression of a departed friend.

The sensitive mimosa shows its dislike to handling, by quickly closing its leaflets, folding them in pairs, when touched. If one leaf is touched the neighboring ones will close sympathetically on a drooping stem.

CACTI SPONGES

Inner walls of cacti are filled with sponges which are able to absorb great quantities of water. They live in an environment where water supply is very scarce and they know that when rain does come it must be saved in storage for coming drought. Cacti roots travel great distances into the earth to find moisture. Cacti's daggers keep away thirsty animal life.

The cocoanut has solved its problem in a queer way. It grows in the tropics and usually near sea shore, with probability of fruit falling into the water. For this reason there is the fibrous outer covering on fruit which keeps out salt water, which would spoil it. Also the nut floats readily. In this way the cocoanuts often succeed in drifting to a far distant shore.

There are some plants which hastily close their flowers at least sign of rain, opening them when the sun shines. Poor-man's weatherglass, or pimperl, does this.—C. D. B.

A PLANT NAVY

The gigantic tropical waterlily, *Victoria Regia*, called "Queen of the Seas," resembles a great floating navy. Each ponderous leaf, five or six feet in diameter, lies on the water like a ship. These ships are manned with a fighting crew of water-birds who live in the lily pads. The birds fish from their ships and feed on the numberless aquatic insects and snails swarming about underneath the pads.

Interesting also, are the broad leaves of smaller pond lilies, which swarm with myriads of tiny animal life, both of the air and water. Here are held the concerts of Mr. Frog, and shelter given by shadows to the tiny fishes.

"NIGHT OWL"

Night blooming plants usually develop no means of protection other than night blooming. They know that they are practically safe at this time from wingless pests, while night moth and other pollen-distributors still work. These plants send forth into darkness sweet odors to call the friendly carriers. Night blooming *cereus* is one of the most beautiful night bloomers. Most night blooming flowers are white or cream color.

Some plants, not carnivorous by nature, trap insects by sticky, hairy stems or leaves. When cold weather kills or drives away the crawling insect life, this stickiness ceases.

RAINFORD FLOWER SHOP



Cut Flowers
Floral Designs

1115 Fourth Street

San Diego

The sourness and bitterness found in unripe fruits is due to temporary acids which ward off attacking animals and birds until ripe seed is ready for distribution. Once the seeds are ready, the plant sweetens and softens fruits to attract the seed-carrier.—C. D. B.

LETTUCE

Centuries before Christ, Persian Kings served salads of leaves of wild lettuces. The Latin name of the lettuce is *Lactuca*, referring to the milky-juice. It has medicinal properties that soothe and sometimes induce sleep.

We call the wild lettuce the "compass plant," because its narrow, opposite leaves hold true to the points of the compass. The blades turn edgewise to avoid full rays of the sun.

The original home of lettuce was in Central Asia. Our cultivated varieties are separated from the prickly wild sort by thousands of years and extensive cultivation.

Lettuce is one of our crops most benefited by artificial light. Plants receiving light from electric arc lights are ready for market two weeks sooner than ordinary.

ERIOGONUMS FOR CACTUS GARDENS

Some of the many cactus enthusiasts have felt the need of an airy plant to grow between the solid arms of cacti, to lighten the effect and break the monotony, and for this purpose they have used some of the annual erigonums. These are sown in Spring to flower and produce their graceful effect during the Summer months and, in the Autumn, are pulled up after they have self-sown their seed for the next year.

There are between 60 and 70 species native to California and among them are some exceedingly graceful and decorative plants. Until recently they have been classed among the weeds and been given little recognition, except by bee keepers who value some of the "buckwheats" and annually take their bees to gather honey from the erigonum-covered mountain sides.

The exact choice of erigonums is a difficult one as they are not yet well-known and the many different species not easily distinguished. The preference is given to those erigonums having graceful branching stems of gray or pink, with flowers of the same shade and of creamy yellow. With the erigonums some of the choicer chorizanthes are often used with fine effect. During the later Summer these two genera combine to form a very dominant feature of California's countryside, sometimes coloring a whole mountain slope raspberry red and suggesting the massed effect of heather seen on the English and Scotch moors, or casting a pink and silver sheen over hills that are otherwise bare, and again, on coastal slopes, enlivening wide stretches with soft rose-pink. So strange and unattached do some of these erigonums and chorizanthes appear that it would almost seem as though they were unique leftovers from some former era of the earth's existence.

—LESTER ROWNTREE.

Carmel, Calif.

(Massachusetts Horticulture)

FISHTAIL PALM

Caryota urens—Toddy or Fishtail Palm—is a fine tropical palm, when young, for indoor or lath culture. Its leaves are cut in such a manner as to resemble a fish's tail, and are most peculiar. This is the wine-palm of India and is said to yield a beverage valuable in commerce. After reaching its maturity (60-80 ft. high and 18 in. thick, in cultivated specimens and higher in its native state) the plant begins flowering at the top, continuing downward until the stem is exhausted.

Let us hope that our two-foot-high pet doesn't decide to try for such a record! We will be content with just the nice little fishtail effect, and no wine-producing stalks are necessary.—C. D. B.

Natives of the Rio Grande

Along the arid stretches of the Rio Grande in Texas and Mexico, are two shrubs which, heretofore, we have not grown in California to any extent but which do remarkably well here. Neither of them have common names, so far as we know, and the botanical names are clumsy as botanical names are apt to be, but the plants would be just as valuable under any name. The first is a blue-flowered shrub—and a good blue-flowered shrubs are not plentiful. *Leucophyllum texanum* grows to six or eight feet with rather small, quite dense foliage, soft silvery in color. The name *Leucophyllum* means "white leaf." Against this silvery background, in the early spring months, are borne the violet-purple flowers, somewhat bell-shaped, about an inch long and as much across. It prefers a situation in full sunshine, and if it is somewhat dry, then the shrub will do just that much better because it is naturally the native of an arid country.

Another wild and woolly Texan is *Anisacanthus wrightii*. It is not quite as large a plant, growing to only three or four feet. It has bright green foliage and is closely set with tubular, vermillion-red flowers almost two inches long, in the spring and summer. This plant has occasionally been known in California, but it should be planted far more than it is at present. It is a shrub which will stand a great deal of neglect, and it does best in very dry situations, and since we have plenty of such locations in Southern California, it should be a valuable asset for our gardens.

PLANTS AS RECLAIMERS

Plants play a tremendous part in the reclaiming of land. But for their work, we would be minus many an island and much valuable seashore land. Sand-binding and other sand-loving plants do this.

Marram-grass, or sand-reed, is one of the most interesting. Its blades are exceedingly strong and are sometimes used in making rope. It does not make good grazing for animals. The roots and buried stems grow to an enormous length and in the process become matted and twisted together so as to bind all invaded land. These shoots reach out in all directions, rooting at every joint. As the wind covers with sand one shoot, the grass keeps climbing to the surface and thus every drift of new sand is tied and laced by the grass's clinging arms.

It does not like salt water, and prefers to stay in and on the sand-dunes, yet not wandering far inland. The marram-grass sucks up quantities of water, keeping the sand always damp, and so stops the sand from blowing away.—C. D. B.

NOT A "CENTURY"

American Agave, or Century Plant, is commonly thought to bloom but once in a hundred years. Matter of fact, they flower on an average after 15 or 20 years, and then die down completely.

The plant lays by its material for future growth in the thick base of its bayonet-like leaves, thus forming a huge rosette. For years it goes on with patience collecting supplies for its one act of flowering. Then, at last, flowering time has come. Suddenly the agave sends up its huge candelabrum 15 to 30 feet high, supporting a colossal cluster of big yellow flowers. This enormous stem takes but a few weeks to grow, but as it does, the once swollen bases of leaves are drained dry. As the seeds fall, the whole plant dies, having completed its life work.—C. D. B.

EARLY TOBACCO

A Spanish explorer, about the middle of the 16th century, wrote of his travels in Mexico, describing plantations of an herb called by the natives "tabacco." The leaves were dried and smoked in pipes. Followers of Columbus, exploring the islands off Florida, saw natives using tobacco. North American Indians used it in pipes also. The Y-shaped pipe, first seen in San Domingo, was called "tabaco." This is probably where the name we now use came from.

Spaniards introduced it in Spain and later plants were taken to France by Nicot, the ambassador to Spain. Famous Spanish physicians hailed it as a cure for disease and called it "the holy herb." The botanist who named it, called it *Nicotiana Tabacum*, after the French ambassador.—C. D. B.

PLANT GUNNERS

There are numerous kinds of plants which shoot their seeds in many different manners. The common yellow oxalis or "sheep sorrel" is a wonderful gunner. The tiny seeds are covered with thin bands that, when touched, act like elastics on a sling-shot. The lightning-like movement turns the seed-pod inside out.

The witch-hazel is able to shoot its seeds from 20 to 25 feet away. The touch-me-not, squirting cucumber, wild geranium, peas, castor-bean and mustard are some of the other archers.

Capsules of certain violets have a mechanical movement of valves, by which the seeds are shot several inches from the parent-plant. The pod divides itself into three valves, lying horizontally. Then it commences shooting. As fast as one seed is projected, another rolls down to take its place, and so on till the last shot.—C. D. B.

SOME PLANTS THAT ARE UNUSUAL

By Fidella G. Woodcock

San Diego Natural History Museum)

A Violet *Echium*

Viper's Bugloss

Last week a beautiful plant of the borage family *Echium plantagineum* was exhibited in Thearle's music store. The inflorescence was much like that of a long bottle brush but the stamens do not appear as in most species of Bugloss. It is a native of Southern Europe.

Alhagi, the Camel's Thorn

On my list of specimens for identification I have a cigar-shaped pod like a cylindrical pea pod. It does not split of itself but has horizontal lines on the shell. The odor is very pleasant and according to description it seems to be from a spiny forage plant of the African deserts. The pods are much like the Carob bean now being planted in Imperial Valley for animal food.

Cinchona in Fruit

In northwest Balboa Park the Cinchona or quinine shrubs sometimes tree have bloomed and the fruits have now set but have not ripened. The seed capsules are marked by lengthwise lines on the surface and split from the base upward.

LANDSCAPING HOME GROUNDS

By L. W. Ramsey

(The Macmillan Co., 1930; \$2.00)

The principal theme of this well organized and attractively printed volume is well expressed by the title chosen for one of the early chapters—"the plan's the thing!" To the owner of a small city lot, finding himself at a loss how best to develop the possibilities of his premises, such a book is an indispensable helpmeet, and here lies its widest field of service, although the later pages especially contain much that is helpful toward the planning and construction of much more pretentious estates. Emphasis is properly laid upon the careful development of the plan as a whole. The illustrations, which have been supplied with generosity, are varied and helpful, adding infinitely to the practical value of the book.—S. S. B.

DANDELION

This gamine of the fields is a jolly and very busy little plant. First glance, it seems like one flower, but in reality it is an assemblage of from one to two hundred tiny ones. In fine weather each eye is open wide, but at night or during rain they close tightly and so no honey or pollen is spoiled. In this flower, seed is set by its own pollen. The ripe seeds are provided with silken parachutes and the friendly wind carries them far and wide to new regions. Medicine called *taraxacum* is extracted from its roots.—C. D. B.

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